Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 2 and replaces the original sheet with Fig. 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Fig. 2 is amended to correct a typographical error. Thus, the amendment to the figure does not introduce new matter.

I. Drawings

Although not objected to, the drawings are amended at Fig. 2, step S10, to correct a typographical error.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

The indication of allowable subject matter in claims 8, 18 and 27, is appreciated they being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 8, 18 and 27, as well as the remaining pending claims, are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed below.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 11, 12, 15-17, 19-21, 23-25 and 30-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2003/0026244 to Pietrowicz et al. (Pietrowicz) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,480,581 to Wu et al. (Wu). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Neither Pietrowicz nor Wu, whether considered alone or in combination, disclose or suggest an IP telephone apparatus for executing a telephone call through a computer network, comprising a main unit having a handset . . . an external telephone connection unit being connectable to an external telephone having a handset; a dialing start command detection unit configured to detect an IP telephone dialing start command, an audio signal input/output unit that inputs/outputs an audio signal for conversation when the dialing start command unit detects the IP telephone dialing start command; a handset validation unit configured to selectively validate one of the handset of the main unit and the handset of the external telephone; an audio signal path switching unit that switches a connection target of the handset

validated by the handset validation unit from the telephone line connection unit to the audio signal input/output unit when the dialing start command detection unit detects the IP telephone dialing start command; and a network communication control unit, further comprising a network terminal that connects to the computer network, the network communications control unit configured to enable the audio signal input/output unit to transmit and receive the audio signal to and from the network terminal when the dialing start command detection unit detects the IP telephone dialing start command..

Pietrowicz relates to a method and apparatus that integrates traditional analog telephony with VoP telephony at the desktop and reduces the amount of equipment on the consumer's desk by reducing the number of devices required. The invention provides for analog and telephony functionalities that are integrated into a <u>single desktop appliance</u>, thereby allowing a user to place calls over a public switched telephone network and a packet network. The interactions are made through a <u>single set</u> of user I/O devices and user audio devices, thereby eliminating duplicate equipment at the desktop (paragraph [0007]).

In an embodiment, the desktop appliance interfaces the public switched telephone network and a packet network into a single set of user I/O and user audio devices. The system allows a user to use either network interface through the user audio devices, to interconnect the interfaces and audio devices to create various conferencing scenarios, to transfer calls between the two network interfaces, and to bridge the two interfaces, thereby treating the device as a "gateway." (Paragraph [0008]). Thus, Pietrowicz merely describes that which is admitted as being known in the Background section of the specification of this application. See, for example, page 1 of the specification which describes an Internet telephone that enables a user to use both Internet telephone and general telephone (ordinary telephone) functions.

Because Pietrowicz merely discloses that which is admitted as being known, and because the problem being addressed in Pietrowicz is the integration of public switched telephone networks and VoP into a single user friendly device to reduce the amount of equipment needed by the user, Pietrowicz fails to recognize the problem being addressed in this application and therefore fails to disclose the structural features provided to address that problem.

As described in the Background section of this application, the prior art, including Pietrowicz, cannot use the Internet telephone function from an external telephone including only a general telephone functionality. In other words, a user is limited to the single device, such as the integrated desktop device described in Pietrowicz, to use the Internet telephone or VoP function.

Wu also relates to an Internet/telephone device. Specifically, Wu provides an adapter and method which can detect the type of incoming call, whether VoP or analog, and automatically switch the communication linkage to a corresponding type of communication without manual operation (col. 1, lines 8-13). Thus, Wu addresses previous disadvantages which would require a user to first place an analog telephone call to the recipient to inform them that a call would be coming over the Internet mode so that the receiving user could switch the equipment accordingly. Thus, Wu does not contemplate the problem being addressed in this application or provide the structural features to address the problem.

It is alleged in the Office Action that the audio port 156 for an external audio device 160 corresponds to "an external telephone connection unit being connectable to an external telephone having a handset" as recited in the rejected claims. However, the audio port 156 does not correspond to the claimed feature as alleged. Pietrowicz describes the audio port 156 as allowing for external audio devices 160, such as an answering machine, to be connected to the appliance. There is no further discussion or description of the audio port

156 in Pietrowicz. Accordingly, the audio port 156 in Pietrowicz does not disclose, suggest or teach an external telephone connection unit being connectable to an external telephone having a handset. In fact, Pietrowicz does not contemplate in any form an external telephone usable with the device. Rather, Pietrowicz specifically describes the system as an integrated single desktop appliance that allows a user to place calls over the public switch telephone network and a packet network through a single set of user I/O devices and user audio devices. Thus, Pietrowicz disclaims any secondary external telephone usable with or connected to the system. Pietrowicz does not teach, suggest or contemplate the external telephone having a handset because Pietrowicz does not address the problem being addressed in this application. As discussed above, the subject matter of this application enables use of an Internet telephone function from an external telephone that includes only a general telephone functionality. As Pietrowicz only discloses that which is admitted as being known, the audio port 156 does not and can not correspond to an external connection unit being connectable to an external telephone having a handset as recited in the rejected claims.

It is further alleged in the Office Action that the switching and bridging system 136 of Pietrowicz corresponds to the audio signal path switching unit recited in the rejected claims. The switching and bridging system 136 does not correspond to the recited feature which includes switching a connection target of a handset validated by the handset validation unit from the telephone line connection unit to the audio signal input/output unit when the dialing start command detection unit detects the IP telephone dialing start command.

When reading the claim as a whole, there is a main unit having a handset and an external telephone having a handset. The audio signal switching path unit switches a connection target of the handset validated by the handset validation unit. Thus, it is clear from the recitation of the rejected claims, that one of the two handsets is being validated and a connection target being selected for that validated handset. In contrast, the switching and

bridging system 136 does not disclose or suggest such an audio signal path switching unit. Firstly, Pietrowicz clearly describes that there is no external telephone having a handset in the system. Rather, Pietrowicz specifically indicates that there is an integrated single desktop appliance having a single set of user audio devices. Additionally, the switching and bridging system 136 is a multi-port audio system interconnecting and/or bridging the PSTN network, the packet network and the user audio devices (paragraph [0041]). Thus, the switching and bridging system 136 provides a digital/analog switching and bridging system that interconnects the analog telephone functionality, the VoP telephone functionality and the user audio devices to allow a user to use either network interface through the user audio devices to interconnect the interfaces and audio devices to create various conferencing scenarios, transfer calls between the two network interfaces and to bridge the two interfaces, thereby the treating the device as a gateway (paragraph [0008]). Accordingly, the switching and bridging system 136 of Pietrowicz does not correspond to the analog switching path unit recited in the rejected claims. For at least these reasons, Pietrowicz fails to disclose the features as alleged in the Office Action.

In addition to these deficiencies, it is admitted in the Office Action that Pietrowicz fails to disclose or suggest <u>a dialing start command detection unit configured to detect an IP telephone and dialing start command</u>. In an effort to overcome the admitted deficiency, Wu is combined with Pietrowicz as allegedly teaching the admittedly deficient feature. Wu is also alleged to disclose <u>a handset validation unit</u> at step S402 of Fig. 4A of Wu. Specifically, it is stated in the Office Action that "step 402" implies the existence to a handset validation unit." Wu makes no such implication. At step 402 of Fig. 4A, an interface module <u>detects an off-hook signal and enables the DSP to detect DTMX signals</u>. Specifically, the interface of the caller detects the off-hook signal and enables the digital signal processor 204 to detect dual tone multi-frequency signals of an Internet call (col. 4, lines 51-55). Accordingly,

step 402 has nothing to do with a handset validation unit configured to selectively validate one of the handset of the main unit and a handset of an external telephone, the external telephone being connected to an external telephone connection unit of the IP telephone apparatus recited in the rejected claims.
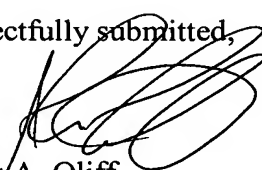
Claims 3, 13, 14 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Pietrowicz in view of Wu and further in view of WO 1/65786 to Erekson et al. (Erekson); and claims 7, 9, 10, 26, 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Pietrowicz in view of Wu and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,741,835 to Pulver. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The rejected claims are allowable for their dependency on their respective base claims as well as for the additional features recited therein. Additionally, as neither Erekson nor Pulver overcome the deficiencies of Pietrowicz and Wu discussed above, the combination of references fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature recited in the rejected claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 22, 26, 28 and 29 is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-32 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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JAO:JWF/ldg

Attachment:
    Replacement Drawing Sheet (Fig. 2)

Date: November 16, 2005

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